

Ceremony Report

**Australian Historic Engineering Plaquing Program
A Historic Engineering Marker (HEM)
for**

**City of Sydney Streetlighting
Centenary, 8th July 2004.**



L-R, Norm Himsley, Minister Frank Sartor, Paul Broad.

Prepared by: Chris Dalitz

Deputy Chairman, Heritage Committee-Sydney Division

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1. Pre-Ceremony activities, flyers, promotion etc.

EMAIL to all ASHET members:

On Monday 5 July, the Engineers Australia Engineering Heritage Committee of engineers Australia is presenting two talks on the history of electricity supply in the city of Sydney to mark the 100th anniversary of the City of Sydney electricity undertaking.

ASHET members and others are invited to attend. Venue is the Harricks Auditorium, Ground Floor, 118 Alfred Street, Milsons Point. Refreshments at 5.30 pm before the talks: no charge, no need to book.

For more details see the attachment or phone Ian Bowie on 9351 2171.

Regards
Ian Arthur
ASHET secretary

Year of the Built Environment (YBE) email:-

New South Wales **YBE2004** Events | 1 July 2004 | www.ybe2004.nsw.gov.au

Mon 5 July **100 Years of Electricity Supply for Sydney, Milson's Point**

This year marks the centenary of the electricity undertaking of the Sydney Municipal Council, which became the Sydney County Council, Sydney Electricity and then EnergyAustralia. After an introduction to the original system, the talk will deal with some of the main themes, including electricity generation in the Sydney metropolitan area, the development of the distribution network, the growth of energy sales, electricity prices and the pattern of energy use. Speakers: George Wilkenfeld and Chris Dalitz. George Wilkenfeld is a Consultant specialising in energy end-use analysis, energy efficiency programs and greenhouse gas emissions accounting. George's research for about twenty years into the history of electricity in NSW has culminated in his being commissioned as co-author of the centenary history of EnergyAustralia. Chris Dalitz is the Senior Project Officer, Electricity Networks of the NSW Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability. He was previously with Advance Energy and the former Sydney County Council. Chris has a long interest in engineering heritage matters and is currently Deputy Chairman of the Engineering Heritage Committee.

All Welcome, 5.30pm for 6pm start, Admission Free, Harricks Auditorium, Ground Floor, 118 Alfred Street, Milsons Point.
Further information: Ian Bowie 9351 2171



The Electric Energy Society of Australia

June Bulletin to all members :-

Upcoming Events

8 July 2004: Centenary

Sydney will celebrate the centenary of electricity supply to the city on July 8 and the NSW committee is liaising with EnergyAustralia to hold several functions. A seminar on the evolution of protection systems is being planned and those interested in attending or participating should contact Bob Parkinson.

EnergyAustralia Celebrates 100 Years of Electricity in Sydney CBD

Mr Chris Dalitz

Please join us to celebrate
Sydney's centenary of electric street lighting

Thursday 8 July 2004

4.15 p.m. for 4.30 p.m. start

Level 4 Staff Cafeteria
EnergyAustralia, 570 George Street, Sydney

Birthday cake, tea/coffee will be served

RSVP:

Please let us know if you can attend by close of business
Monday 5 July

E-mail address: ecappello@energy.com.au

Phone: 02 9269 2194

Visitors please note: Entrance to EnergyAustralia offices is on Bathurst Street.
Please register at the security desk on arrival and proceed via the lifts to Level 4.

Function will conclude at 5.30 p.m.

Ceremony Photographs









3. Post Ceremony reports, media etc.

POWER INDUSTRY NEWS

A CENTENARY OF POWER

SYDNEY, July 9 - Sydney celebrated a centenary of electric power last Thursday.

CBD based EnergyAustralia says that at 5pm on 8 July, 1904, the Lady Mayoress of Sydney officially turned on the power, bringing light to Sydney's CBD, from Circular Quay to Redfern, and from Hyde Park to Darling Harbour.

The switching-on ceremony was performed at Pyrmont power station - on the site of what is now Sydney Casino.

Lord Mayor Samuel E. Lees pulled a lever that released the steam from the station's 2,500 horsepower boiler, powering the generators. The Lady Mayoress turned on the electric current with a specially manufactured commemorative gold key.

The first power station in Sydney was originally going to be located at Darling Harbour, but the site was abandoned due to an outbreak of Bubonic Plague.

By the end of 1904, what was then Sydney Municipal Council had pushed its street lighting beyond the CBD to Oxford Street, Harris Street and Kings Cross, and had connected 86 customers to the network. There were 343 streetlights in 1904 - compared to more than 240,000 across today's network.

It was reported that for the year 1905, total energy supplied was 2.6 MWh. EnergyAustralia now distributes some 26,000 GWhs.

EnergyAustralia says its customer numbers have risen from 86 in the first year to 1.4 million today.

Power Transmission and Distribution Magazine



100 years plaquing:

Mr Paul Broad, Managing Director of EnergyAustralia, the NSW Minister for Energy & Utilities, Hon. Frank Sartor MP and Mr Norm Himsley, Senior Vice President of Engineers Australia, Sydney Division

100 YEARS CELEBRATIONS - 8TH JULY 2004

Thursday 8th July 2004 marked 100 years of Electric Streetlighting to the City of Sydney. A function hosted by EnergyAustralia at their head office in George Street, Sydney included cutting a birthday cake, illuminating a large, inflatable light globe, and a Plaquing Ceremony (Historic Engineering Marker) held in association with Engineers Australia.

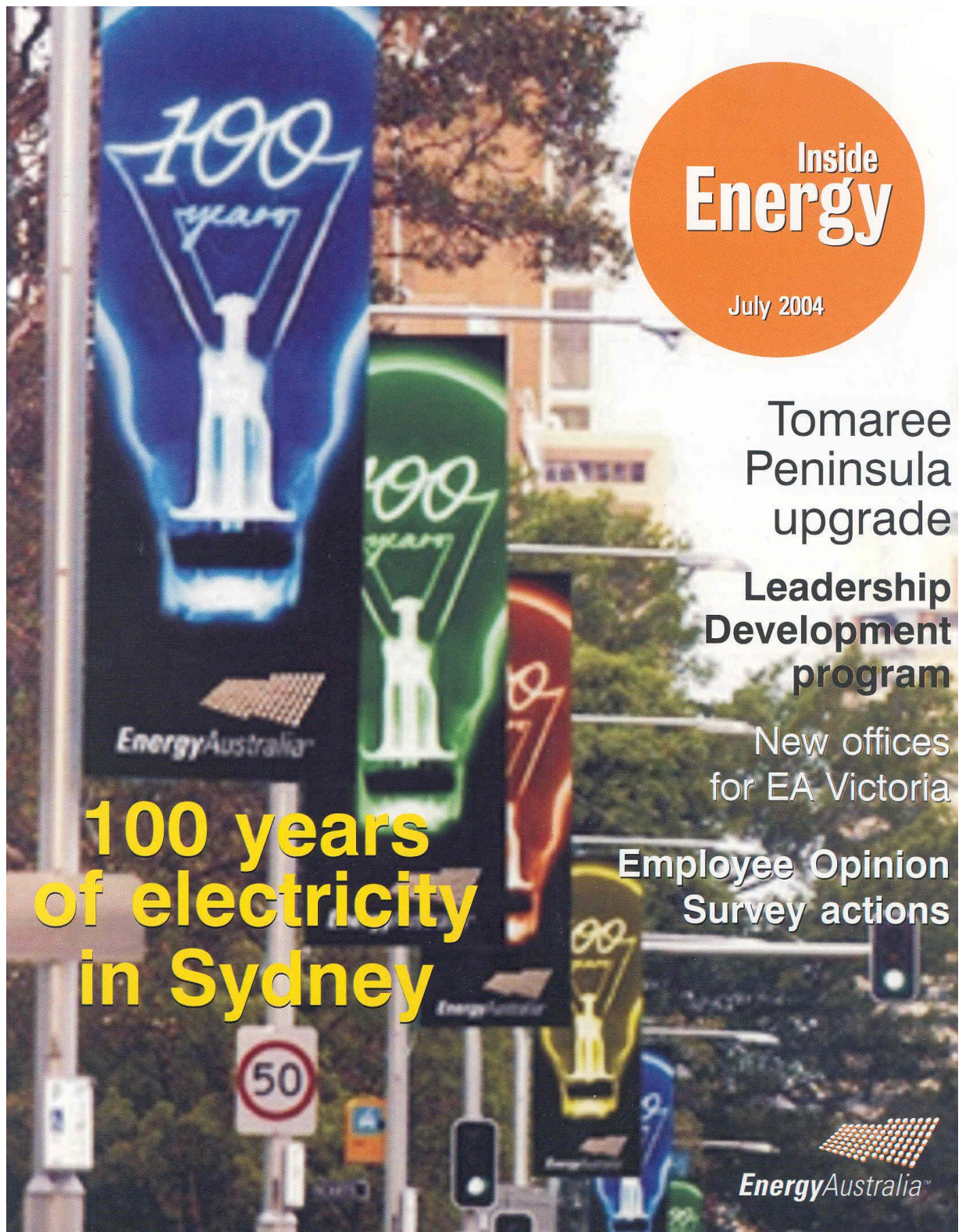
The celebrations pivoted around 5:00pm, 100 years exactly since the then Lady Mayoress of Sydney, Mrs S.E. Lees, officially 'switched on' the electricity supply to the city on July 8th 1904. As she turned the key, the Lady Mayoress said :

"I have much pleasure in switching on the electric lighting for the City of Sydney. I trust that it will be a boon to the citizens and an encouragement to the enterprise of the City Council".

Short speeches were made by Mr Paul Broad, Managing Director of EnergyAustralia, the NSW Minister for Energy & Utilities, Hon. Frank Sartor MP and Mr Norm Himsley, Senior Vice President of Engineers Australia, Sydney Division.

Approximately 150 guests attended the celebrations. They included past and present employees of EnergyAustralia, officers from the City Council, and representatives from Engineers Australia including the Heritage Committee (Sydney Division), Electrical Branch (Sydney Division) and the Electric Energy Society of Australia.

Chris Dalitz



Inside
Energy

July 2004

Tomaree
Peninsula
upgrade

Leadership
Development
program

New offices
for EA Victoria

Employee Opinion
Survey actions

**100 years
of electricity
in Sydney**

EnergyAustralia



Centenary

celebrations in July

Electricity was introduced into Sydney's Central Business District 100 years ago on July 8 when the city's lights were switched from gas. As the organisation which inherited the responsibility for powering Sydney's CBD and surrounding suburbs, we are celebrating this significant occasion too.

The morning of July 8, 1904, had all the makings of a public relations disaster on such an important day. Gale-force winds and rain lashed Sydney, damaging property and causing localised flooding.

Ships that had left Sydney Harbour were forced to turn back, and the storms had brought down more than 200km of telephone lines north and south of the city.

Then, as is still the case in the 21st century, the biggest threat to reliable electricity supplies was the weather.

The grand switching on of Sydney's electric lighting system at the Pyrmont Power Station was a small affair – the bad weather blamed for the low spectator numbers. In the pre-television era five o'clock on a rainy afternoon must have seemed as good a time as any other for a major public event.

The official party gathered inside the new power station included Sydney's Lord Mayor, the Right Honourable Samuel E. Lees and members of the council, the Town Clerk and few senior bureaucrats and engineers.

As is also still the case in the 21st century, the speeches began. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported: "There was the usual flow of oratory, it being the unwritten law of such ceremonies that retrospection should be indulged in, hopes expressed and congratulations exchanged."

The action began when the Lord Mayor pulled a lever that released the steam from the station's 2,500 horsepower boiler, which in turn powered generators capable of producing 5,000 volt alternating current.

As well as its 30m long boiler room, the new power house comprised an engine room, and office block.

The Lord Mayor's wife, the Lady Mayoress, who is referred to in the history books as Mrs Samuel E. Lees, turned on the electric current with a specially manufactured commemorative gold key (it is now housed in the Powerhouse Museum).

As she turned, she said: "I have much pleasure in switching on the electric lighting for the City of Sydney. I trust that it will be a boon to the citizens and an encouragement to the enterprise of the City Council."

The afternoon peak hour crowds struggling home through the dismal weather stopped in their tracks. Sydney, from Circular Quay to Redfern, and from Hyde Park to Darling Harbour, at long last had electric light.

In the 100 years since that day, our lives have been transformed by electricity and it is now almost impossible to imagine life without it.

As an organisation, we are celebrating the centenary in a number of ways, including dressing-up George St and our head office building with colourful "100 Years of Electricity" banners. We are also illuminating a large energy efficient light globe on Level 4 of Head Office to provide the link with our current energy efficiency awareness campaign and the globe give-away for customers.